



Emergency Preparedness: Addressing Disability Issues in the Workplace

Employer TOOLKIT

Pathways
TO EMPLOYMENT

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Minnesota State Council
On Disability

Your Technical Assistance and Training Resource

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A partnership effort between the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, and the Minnesota State Council on Disability, Pathways to Employment will create a coordinated statewide strategy to facilitate the competitive employment of Minnesotans with disabilities.

MSCOD is a state agency that advises the governor, the state legislature, state agencies and the general public on public policy issues affecting persons with disabilities. We work to advance the rights of Minnesotans with disabilities.

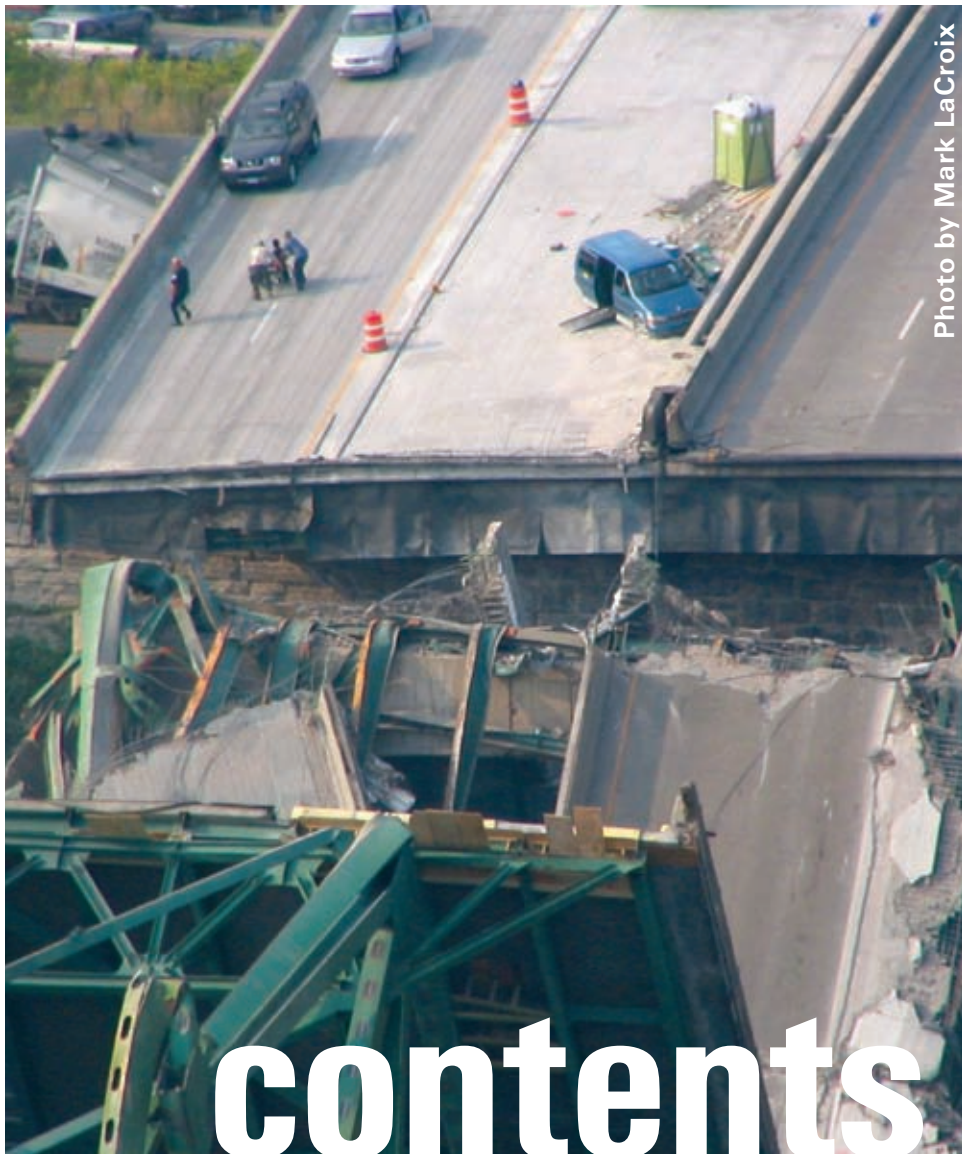


Photo by Mark LaCroix

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Emergency Preparedness

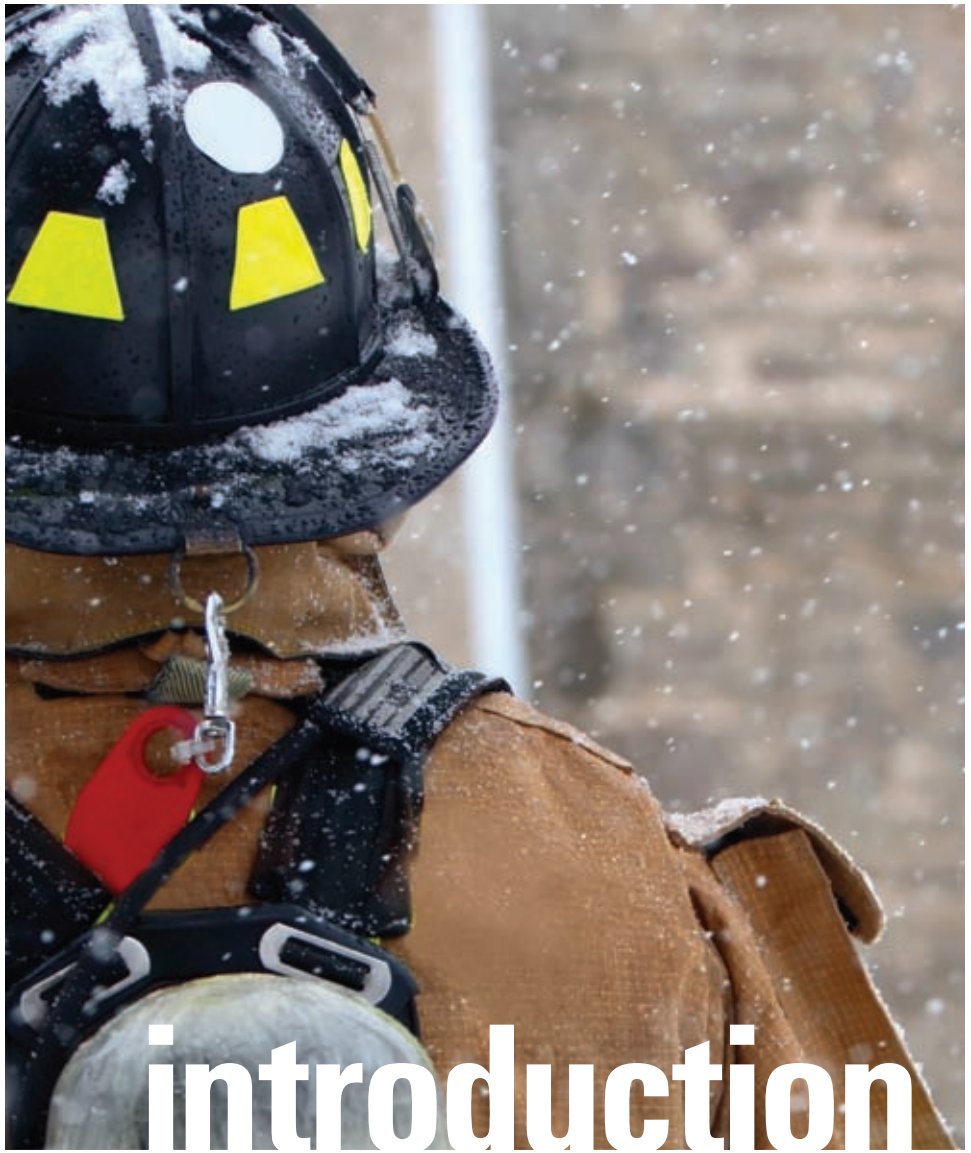
Addressing Disability Issues in the Workplace

A Guide for Employers

Introduction

Types of Emergencies

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ADDRESSING DISABILITY ISSUES IN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Be Prepared

The national and international events of the new century have made Emergency Preparedness Planning a key issue in organizational management.

We trust that this Guide will serve as a key component of your organizational planning and as a tool to help communicate the importance of addressing disability issues in all emergency preparedness plans. In Section 2 we list practical steps to the planning process, developed by the Job Accommodation Network. Section 4 includes a Sample Plan that can prove invaluable as you develop your plan. Other sections include a Supply Kit checklist, examples of evacuation equipment, and practical tips for assisting persons with disabilities in an evacuation, with specific information by type of disability.

Be in Compliance

The legal considerations surrounding emergency preparedness for people with disabilities are listed in several sections of this guide. An overview of these laws, including the Presidential Order and the ADA, are in Section 1. Related topics include confidentiality issues in Section 3 and tax incentives in Section 7.

As you review this Guide, you will see that with smart preparation and planning for emergencies, you will address disability issues and be in compliance.

Be Informed

Use the additional resources in section 10. We welcome questions about these and other Emergency Preparedness topics. Feel free to call or email us for additional information, resources, or to schedule focused training at your workplace.

Minnesota State Council on Disability
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Web: www.disability.state.mn.us



**types
of emergencies**

TYPES OF EMERGENCIES

While there are many types of emergencies, these are the most common ones.



Fire

Fires are the most common and most fatal of emergencies.



Tornado

In Minnesota, tornadoes have occurred in every month from March through November.



Blizzard or Winter Storm

The February 28 - March 2, 2007 blizzard brought over 20 inches of snow and winds exceeding 50 mph to the Duluth area.



Flood

The southeastern Minnesota floods of 2007 caused seven fatalities and affected the counties of Fillmore, Houston, Olmsted, Steele, Wabasha and Winona.



Landslide/Mudslide

In September of 2005, heavy rains caused mudslides in Houston County.



Chemical Incident

In May of 2006, about 5,000 gallons of hydrochloric acid spilled from a rail car near downtown St. Paul, causing the evacuation of about 50 people from nearby businesses.



Utility Failure

Every year, heat waves, high demand, storms, and other incidents cause gas and electricity failures in Minnesota.



Infectious Disease Outbreak

Between January and July of 2008, 127 measles cases in 15 states (including Minnesota) were reported, the largest number in the past seven years. Other diseases and viruses being monitored in Minnesota include anthrax, influenza, plague, and smallpox.



Terrorist Incident

The 9/11/2001 terrorist attacks in New York City have caused a renewed focus on emergency preparedness in the whole country.

A close-up photograph of a person's arm and torso. The person is wearing a grey medical wristband on their left wrist. They are wearing a plaid shirt with a pattern of red, green, and blue lines on a light background. The background is dark and out of focus.

section 1


Emergency Preparedness
Planning for EMPLOYERS

SECTION 1

Emergency Preparedness Planning for EMPLOYERS
Addressing Disability Issues in the Workplace

This PowerPoint presentation is part of MSCOD’s training for employers. It is intended to be used during a live MSCOD presentation, and it is complete only with your notes from the presentation. Please contact us for additional information.

**Emergency Preparedness Planning for
EMPLOYERS: *Addressing Disability
Issues in the Workplace***



MSCOD
Minnesota State Council
On Disability
Your technical assistance & training resource

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Agenda

- ☐ Introductions
- ☐ Statistics & Definitions
- ☐ Legal Considerations
- ☐ Various Elements in Creating your Plan
- ☐ Overview of Sample Plan
- ☐ Your Emergency Preparedness TOOL KIT
- ☐ Further Questions & Comments
- ☐ Close

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What We Know:

- ❑ Americans enjoy relative security in their everyday lives
- ❑ Many people and organizations do not adequately plan for emergencies
- ❑ Most lack knowledge in how to proceed

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Preparedness & Planning



- ❑ Research and anecdotal evidence indicates emergency preparedness, response & recovery efforts often overlook the needs and perspectives of people with disabilities

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Numbers & Facts

- ❑ Approximately 20% of the U.S. population (or 1 in 5) has a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). (per recent U.S. Census Bureau)
- ❑ This number will increase dramatically as our society ages.
- ❑ In our workplaces today, there are more employees with disabilities than ever before.

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Definition of Disability

Three-prong definition (under the ADA law):

- ☐ Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- ☐ Has a record of such an impairment; or
- ☐ Is regarded as having such an impairment

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Be Prepared for Disasters

- ☐ "To be better prepared as a nation, we all must do our part to plan for disasters.
- ☐ Individuals with and without disabilities, can decrease the impact of a disaster by taking steps to prepare BEFORE an event occurs."

-the National Organization on Disability (NOD)

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Practice & Planning Example

- ☐ *WITHOUT assistance from his employer:*
 - During the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, an employee with a mobility impairment was working on the 69th floor
 - He had no plan or assistive device(s) in place
 - It took over six hours for him to safely exit the building

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Practice & Planning Example (Cont.)

- *WITH assistance from his employer:*
 - In the 2001 attack on the World Trade Center, the same employee on the 69th floor, had planned in advance to:
 - exit the building using assistance from others
 - have an evacuation chair stored under his desk
 - It only took 90 minutes to get him safely out of the building

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LEGAL Considerations

Executive Order

- July 22, 2004, President George W. Bush issues Executive Order 13347 "Individuals with Disabilities in Emergency Preparedness"
 - Directs the federal government to work together with:
 - state governments
 - local governments

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Executive Order (Cont.):



- ☐ tribal governments
- ☐ private organizations
- ☒ To address the safety and security needs of people with disabilities

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Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) law of 1990



- ☐ Also impacts emergency preparedness plans
- ☐ It prohibits discrimination in employment as well as other matters
- ☐ Providing a reasonable accommodation to an individual with a disability is a central concept under this law

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Inclusion in the Process

- ☐ Emergency Preparedness Plan development SHOULD always include people with disabilities
- ☐ Establish a process for reasonable accommodation requests as they pertain to emergency management

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Identifying who may need Assistance:

- ☐ Before employment begins
- ☐ On the job
- ☐ Employees with obvious disabilities

Note: Refer to EEOC brief in your Tool Kit

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GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS for Emergency Plans

Organizational Buy-In

- ☐ Obtain support & commitment from senior level management
- ☐ A plan is only as good as the financial and personnel resources supporting it

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Who Needs to be Involved

- ☐ Building Managers
- ☐ Safety & Security Personnel
- ☐ First Responders
- ☐ Managers/Supervisors
- ☐ Employees with Disabilities

Note: It's beneficial to work with adjacent businesses and agencies to avoid conflicts regarding evacuation routes & assembly areas



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Remember to...

- ☐ Ensure that all phases of emergency management consider the needs of people with disabilities



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Critical Foundation Piece

- ☐ Define, agree upon & communicate to all necessary staff, steps for evaluating an emergency and taking subsequent action:
 - Type of emergency?
 - How will employees, customers be notified?
 - Appropriate response?
 - Will evacuation routes change, will elevators be operational? (I.e. bomb threat, tornado, fire)

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General Categories to be Considered:

- ☐ Mobility
- ☐ Low Vision / Blind
- ☐ Deaf / Hard of Hearing
- ☐ Speech
- ☐ Cognitive
- ☐ Mental Illness
- ☐ Hidden Disabilities
- ☐ Other

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Four Elements of Evacuation Information

1. Notification (What is the emergency?)
2. Way finding (Where is the way out?)
3. Use of the way (Can they get out by self, or do they need help?)
 - Self
 - Self with emergency device
 - Self with assistance

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Four Elements of Evacuation Information (Cont.)

4. Type of Assistance (What kind of help may they need?)
 - Who
 - What
 - Where
 - When
 - How

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Successful Implementation is:

- Making sure staff are trained, then...
 - PRACTICE!
 - PRACTICE!
 - PRACTICE!

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The Great Controversy

- Defend in place:
 - Person goes to designated area of refuge and waits for first responders
 - Predetermined location must be fire rated and should have two-way communication
 - Recommended by most rescue professionals
 - Is opposed by many individuals with disabilities

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The Great Controversy (Cont.)

- Evacuate:
 - Person with a disability is immediately evacuated with everyone else
 - A direct, accessible route is identified or assistance is provided by other individuals
 - Ensure procedures, equipment, signage and supports in place to safely evacuate everyone
- Communicate!

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Elevator Use & Issues

- ❑ Determine appropriate situations for elevator use
- ❑ Most people are conditioned to avoid elevators during an emergency
- ❑ However, elevators can be used in certain circumstances
- ❑ Discuss with emergency response personnel this issue relative to your workplace or business



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Additional Important Elements of An Evacuation Plan

- ❑ Identify and train all staff
- ❑ Rank staff in order to provide assistance to individuals with disabilities
- ❑ Research and secure adaptive equipment needed during various types of emergencies

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Emergency Evacuation Equipment

- ❑ With input from employees and vendors, research and determine emergency evacuation equipment needs
- ❑ Secure emergency evacuation equipment
- ❑ Store in a visible & convenient place
- ❑ Secure first aid kit for service animal or guide dog

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Keep in Mind...

- ❑ Some evacuation devices and methods, like the wheelchair-carry, require the assistance of others.



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Examples of Equipment



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Walk-Thru of Sample Plan

- ❑ When Alarm Sounds
- ❑ Meeting Place for Assistance and Evacuation Chairs
- ❑ When Assistance is Not Available
- ❑ Assigned Stairways
- ❑ Floor Wardens
- ❑ Meeting Places

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Employees with Disabilities

- ☐ Specific Needs
- ☐ Evacuation Chairs
- ☐ Characteristics of Building
- ☐ Designated Meeting Locations
- ☐ Types of Alarms & Elevator Use
- ☐ Providing Other Types of Assistance
- ☐ Training & Practice

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**PLAN
and PRACTICE!**

CHANGING the Types of Drills

- ☐ Each drill should be conducted as seriously as an actual emergency
- ☐ Practice provides opportunities to fine-tune what works & what doesn't
- ☐ Planning is an ongoing effort
- ☐ Written plans & associated documents are never final or complete
- ☐ They must be evaluated & updated regularly

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PRACTICE, Practice, Practice!

- ☐ Practice is an essential component of emergency preparedness
- ☐ It is impossible to prepare adequately for an emergency without it



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In Closing...

- ☐ Your Emergency Preparedness TOOL KIT
- ☐ Resources used in this initiative, include:
 - ☐ American Red Cross
 - ☐ Federal Emergency Management Agency
 - ☐ National Organization on Disability
 - ☐ National Fire Protection Association
- ☐ Further Questions / Comments
- ☐ Evaluations

THANK YOU!

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Tracking Tool

This section is designed to help you keep track of your training in **Addressing Disability Issues in Emergency Preparedness.**

We recommend that you review this section regularly as you participate in the planning and readiness process for your organization. To document your participation for your own records, add “MSCOD” in the date section to indicate when you attended MSCOD’s presentation of this section.

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Date:					



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section 2

**Employer's Guide to Including
Employees with Disabilities in
Emergency Evacuation Plans**

SECTION 2

Employer's Guide to Including Employees with Disabilities in Emergency Evacuation Plans

INTRODUCTION

Interest in emergency evacuation planning has increased dramatically since the September 11 terrorist attacks. In turn, the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) started receiving more calls from employers requesting information about their legal obligation to develop emergency evacuation plans and how to include employees with disabilities in such plans. This publication addresses these issues.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Although employers are not required to have emergency evacuation plans under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), if employers covered by the ADA opt to have such plans they are required to include people with disabilities. Further, employers who do not have emergency evacuation plans may nonetheless have to address emergency evacuation for employees with disabilities as a reasonable accommodation under Title I of the ADA. In addition, employers in certain industries may have obligations to develop emergency evacuation plans under the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act) or under state and local law.

Whether mandatory or voluntary, many employers decide to develop emergency evacuation plans. The following provides steps for including employees with disabilities in those plans.

STEPS FOR INCLUDING EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES IN EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLANNING

I. Plan Development

The first step for including employees with disabilities in emergency evacuation plans is plan development. Plan development begins with identifying accommodation needs. One of the best ways to identify accommodation needs is to ask employees whether they have limitations that might interfere with safe emergency evacuation. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

(EEOC) recently issued guidance that discusses what information employers are allowed to gather when developing an emergency evacuation plan. See Section 3 for details.

Once accommodation needs have been identified, the employer should choose effective accommodation options. Often employees with disabilities are a good resource for accommodation ideas. In addition, employers should contact local fire, police, and HazMat departments to determine what services they can offer. Finally, employers can contact other resources such as JAN. JAN can provide specific accommodation ideas on a case by case basis. The following is an overview of frequently suggested accommodation ideas for emergency evacuation.

General Accommodations:

- Employers should have emergency alarms and signs showing the emergency exit routes. These alarms and signs should be accessible and maintained in proper working order.
- Employers may want to implement a “buddy system” for all employees. A buddy system involves employees working in teams so they can locate and assist each other in emergencies.
- Employers may want to designate areas of rescue assistance. The ADA Standards for Accessible Design specifically address areas of rescue assistance, for more information please go to www.usdoj.gov. If these areas do not have escape routes, they should have 1) an operating phone, cell-phone, TTY, and two-way radio so that emergency services can be contacted; 2) a closing door; 3) supplies that enable individuals to block smoke from entering the room from under the door; 4) a window and something to write with (lipstick, marker) or a “help” sign to alert rescuers that people are in this location; and respirator masks.
 - Locate information on TTYs from JAN’s SOAR at www.jan.wvu.edu/cgi-win/OrgQuery.exe?Hea84
 - Locate information on respirators from JAN’s SOAR at www.jan.wvu.edu/cgi-win/OrgQuery.exe?Sol523

Motor Impairments:

- To evacuate individuals with motor impairments, employers can purchase evacuation devices. These devices help move people with motor impairments down the stairs or across rough terrain. If evacuation devices are used, personnel should be trained to operate and maintain them.
 - Locate information on emergency evacuation devices from JAN's SOAR at: www.jan.wvu.edu/cgi-win/OrgQuery.exe?Sol193.
- Employers should remove any physical barriers (boxes, supplies, furniture) to insure a barrier-free route of travel out of the building.
- Employers may want to provide heavy gloves to protect individuals' hands from debris when pushing their manual wheelchairs, a patch kit to repair flat tires, and extra batteries for those who use motorized wheelchairs or scooters. Arrangements should also be made to make wheelchairs available after evacuation.

Sensory Impairments:

- Employers should install lighted fire strobes and other visual or vibrating alerting devices to supplement audible alarms. Lighted strobes should not exceed five flashes per second due to risk of triggering seizures in some individuals. Section 4.28 of the ADAAG (www.access-board.gov/adaag/html/adaag.htm#4.28) specifically addresses alarms.
- Employers may want to provide alerting devices, vibrating paging devices, wireless communicators, or two-way paging systems to alert individuals with hearing impairments of the need to evacuate.
 - Locate information on paging devices from JAN's SOAR at www.jan.wvu.edu/cgi-win/OrgQuery.exe?Sol493.
 - Locate information on alerting devices from JAN's SOAR at www.jan.wvu.edu/cgi-win/OrgQuery.exe?Sol419.
- Employers should install tactile signage and maps for employees with vision impairments. Braille signage, audible directional signage, and pedestrian systems are also available. These products may benefit other people who must navigate smoke-filled exit routes.
 - Locate information on tactile signage from JAN's SOAR at www.jan.wvu.edu/cgi-win/OrgQuery.exe?Sol231.

- Locate information on tactile graphics and maps from JAN's SOAR at www.jan.wvu.edu/cgi-win/OrgQuery.exe?Sol401.
- Employers may also want to provide alpha-numeric pagers or other communication devices to individuals with speech impairments so they can communicate with personnel in an emergency.
 - Locate information on communication aids from JAN's SOAR at www.jan.wvu.edu/cgi-win/OrgQuery.exe?Sol267.

Cognitive/Psychiatric Impairments:

- Employers should consider ways of communicating with people who have cognitive impairments. For example, some individuals may benefit from pictures of buddies, color coding of escape doors and areas of rescue assistance, and information on tape or cd-rom.
- Employers should consider the effects of training for emergency evacuation. Some individuals with psychiatric impairments benefit from frequent emergency drills, but for others practice drills may trigger anxiety. Notifying employees of upcoming practice drills and allowing them to opt out of participation may be a reasonable accommodation. In this case, another form of training for emergency evacuation procedures may be needed, for example providing detailed written instructions.

Respiratory Impairments:

- Employees with respiratory impairments may have limitations exacerbated by smoke, dust, fumes, chemicals, and other odors and may benefit from products such as emergency evacuation hoods, masks, and respirators. Using areas of rescue assistance until emergency personnel arrive may also be an option.
 - Locate information on evacuation hoods from JAN's SOAR at www.jan.wvu.edu/cgi-win/OrgQuery.exe?Sol596.
 - Locate information on respirators and masks from JAN's SOAR at www.jan.wvu.edu/cgi-win/OrgQuery.exe?Sol523.

- Employees with respiratory impairments may have breathing difficulties when walking distances and therefore have problems descending stairs. Employers may want to consider purchasing evacuation devices, relocating the employees' workstations, and working with the employee to ensure availability of adequate medical supplies.

After effective accommodations are chosen, employers should decide who will be involved in implementing the evacuation plan, commit the plan to writing and share it with employees for feedback, practice the plan to make sure it works, and modify the plan as needed.

II. Plan Implementation

The second step for including employees with disabilities in emergency evacuation plans is plan implementation. After the final evacuation plan is written, a copy should be distributed to all employees and key personnel. In addition, an evacuation drill should be performed to make sure all employees are familiar with the plan. Finally, the plan should be integrated into the standard operating procedures.

III. Plan Maintenance

The final step for including employees with disabilities in emergency evacuation plans is plan maintenance. To insure that accommodations continue to be effective, the evacuation plan should be practiced and accommodations updated periodically. In addition, a system for reporting new hazards and accommodation needs should be developed; a relationship with local fire, police, and HazMat departments should be maintained; and new employees should be made aware of the plan. Finally, all accommodation equipment used in emergency evacuation should be inspected and maintained in proper working order.

EMPLOYERS' GUIDE TO INCLUDING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLANS – A CHECKLIST

I. PLAN DEVELOPMENT.

A. Identify Accommodation Needs

- ☐ Ask employees to self-identify accommodation needs for emergency evacuation and assure employees that this is voluntary and confidential.
- ☐ Complete a hazard analysis to help identify workplace hazards that may impede emergency evacuation.
- ☐ Perform sample drills to help employees identify limitations that may affect their ability to evacuate in an emergency.
- ☐ Develop a method to identify visitors with special needs.

B. Investigate Accommodation Options

- ☐ Ask employees with disabilities for their accommodation ideas.
- ☐ Consult with local fire, police, and HazMat departments.
- ☐ Explore various accommodation options for emergency evacuation.

C. Finalize the Plan

- ☐ Identify and include key personnel who will be involved in emergency evacuation.
- ☐ Conduct mock drills with key personnel.
- ☐ Commit the plan to writing.
- ☐ Make necessary modifications to the evacuation plan.

II. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION.

- ☐ Distribute a copy of the evacuation plan to all employees.
(Provide alternative format.)
- ☐ Conduct practice evacuation drills.
- ☐ Integrate the evacuation plan into the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

III. PLAN MAINTENANCE.

- ☐ Develop a system for reporting new hazards and safety concerns.
- ☐ Create a procedure to identify the accommodation needs of new employees.
- ☐ Review and modify the evacuation plan after scheduled and unscheduled practice drills.
- ☐ Facilitate relationships with fire, police, and HazMat departments.
- ☐ Inspect and maintain emergency evacuation equipment.

Source: Job Accommodation Network (JAN), a service of the Office of Disability Employment Policy of the U.S. Department of Labor.

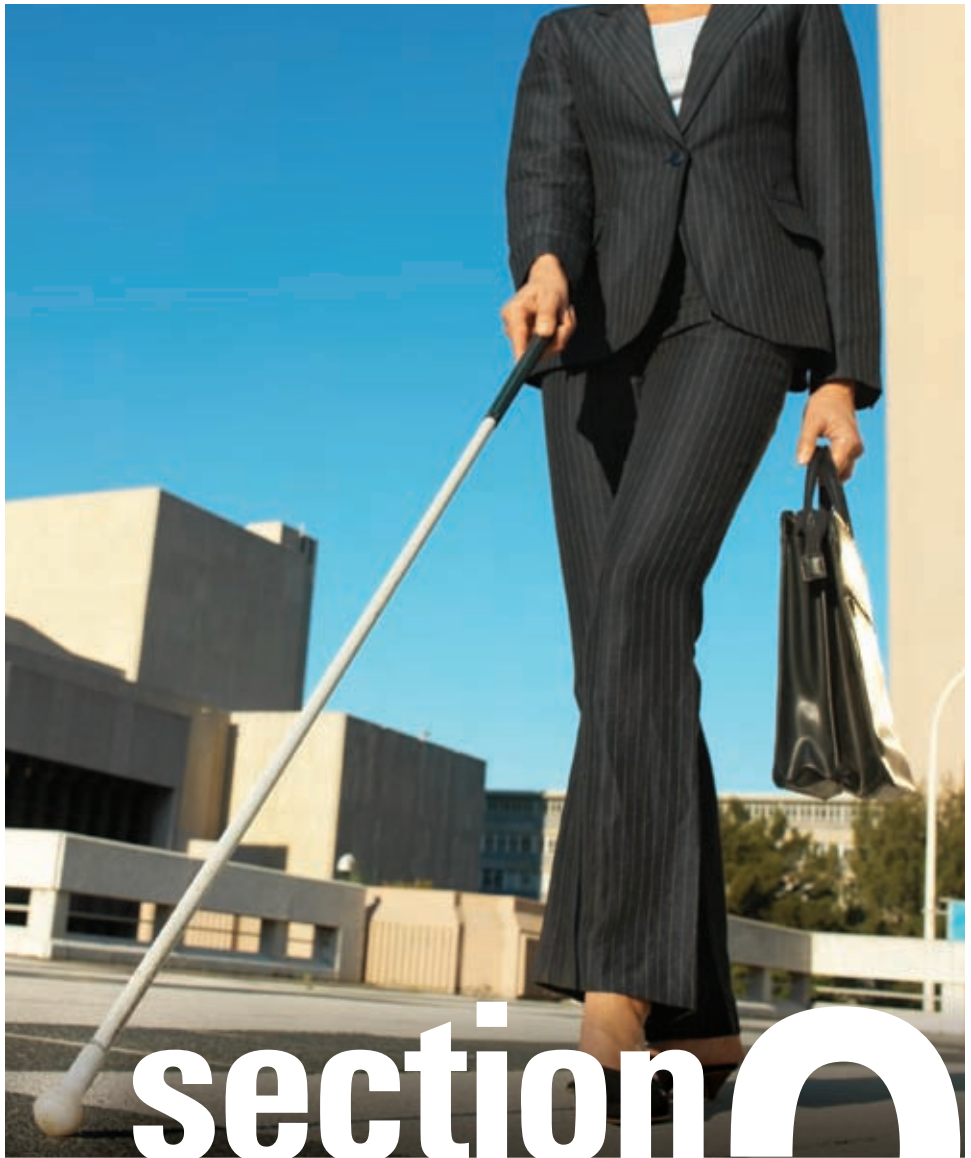
Authors: Linda Carter Batiste, J.D. and Beth Loy, Ph.D.

Link as of May 2008: www.jan.wvu.edu/media/emergency.html

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Initials:					
Date:					
Dates When Practice Drills Carried Out:					



Obtaining and Using Employee Medical Information as Part of Emergency Evacuation Procedures

3

SECTION 3

Obtaining and Using Employee Medical Information as Part of Emergency Evacuation Procedures

INTRODUCTION

In light of recent events, many employers are developing or re-evaluating emergency procedures to ensure the safe evacuation of all employees. A comprehensive emergency evacuation plan should provide for prompt and effective assistance to individuals whose medical conditions may necessitate it. Many employers have asked how the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act affect their ability to achieve this goal.(1) Specifically, employers have asked whether they may request information to help identify individuals who might need assistance because of a medical condition and whether they can share this information with others in the workplace. As the following questions and answers demonstrate, federal disability discrimination laws do not prevent employers from obtaining and appropriately using information necessary for a comprehensive emergency evacuation plan.

I. May an employer ask employees whether they will require assistance in the event of an evacuation because of a disability or medical condition?

Yes. Some employees may need assistance because of medical conditions that are not visually apparent. Others may have obvious disabilities or medical conditions but may not need assistance. Employers, therefore, are allowed to ask employees to self-identify if they will require assistance because of a disability or medical condition.

II. How may an employer identify individuals who may require assistance?

There are three ways that an employer may obtain information:

- After making a job offer, but before employment begins, an employer may ask all individuals whether they will need assistance during an emergency.

- An employer also may periodically survey all of its current employees to determine whether they will require assistance in an emergency, as long as the employer makes it clear that self-identification is voluntary and explains the purpose for requesting the information.
- Finally, whether an employer periodically surveys all employees or not, it may ask employees with known disabilities if they will require assistance in the event of an emergency. An employer should not assume, however, that everyone with an obvious disability will need assistance during an evacuation. For example, many individuals who are blind may prefer to walk down stairs unassisted. People with disabilities are generally in the best position to assess their particular needs.

An employer should inform all individuals who are asked about their need for emergency assistance that the information they provide will be kept confidential and shared only with those who have responsibilities under the emergency evacuation plan. (See Question 4 below.)

III. May an employer specifically ask what type of assistance will be needed?

Yes. An employer may ask individuals who indicate a need for assistance because of a medical condition to describe the type of assistance they think will be needed. One way that this can be done is by giving all employees a memo with an attached form requesting information. The employer also may have a follow-up conversation with an individual when necessary to obtain more detailed information. For example, it would be important for an employer to know whether someone who uses a wheelchair because of mobility limitations is able to walk independently, with or without the use of crutches or a cane, in an emergency situation. It also would be important for an employer to know if an individual will need any special medication, equipment, or device (e.g., an assisted wheelchair carrier strap or a mask because of a respiratory condition) in the event of an emergency. Of course, an employer is entitled only to the information necessary for it to be prepared to provide assistance. This means that, in most instances, it will be unnecessary for an employer to know the details of an individual's medical condition.

IV. Who is allowed to have information about employees needing assistance in an emergency?

The ADA has provisions that require employers to keep medical information about applicants and employees confidential. These provisions, however, include an exception that allows an employer to share medical information with first aid and safety personnel. This exception would allow an employer to share information about the type of assistance an individual needs in the event of an evacuation with medical professionals, emergency coordinators, floor captains, colleagues who have volunteered to act as “buddies,” building security officers who need to confirm that everyone has been evacuated, and other non-medical personnel who are responsible for ensuring safe evacuation. These individuals are entitled to the information necessary to fulfill their responsibilities under the employer’s emergency evacuation plan.

Source: U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
Link as of May 2008: www.eeoc.gov/facts/evacuation.html

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Initials:					
Date:					



section 4

Access Board Emergency
Evacuation Procedures and
SAMPLE PLAN

SECTION 4

Access Board Emergency Evacuation Procedures SAMPLE EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

This is the Access Board's current emergency evacuation plan, which it is making publicly available, along with information on how it was developed, as a resource for other organizations that may implement or update their own plans. While this plan is specific to the Board's workforce and building site, it may help others identify and address some of the important issues that need to be taken into account in developing evacuation plans that accommodate persons with disabilities. Questions on the Board's evacuation plan can be directed to Peg Blechman (202) 272-0043 (voice) or (202) 272-0082 (TTY) or blechman@access-board.gov.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

I. When Alarm Sounds

Elevator lobby alarm only - Receptionist to immediately verify circumstances and make an announcement accordingly. The information should be relayed to the floor wardens and alternate wardens. If verification is not made within 5 minutes, all occupants and employees must evacuate.

All other alarms or announcements require immediate evacuation.

Employees must close their office door after vacating.

Pull Alarm Mounting Locations

USE ONLY WHEN THERE IS A FIRE IN YOUR OFFICE AREA.

1. Wall near Executive Secretary's desk
2. Wall outside the Supply Room
3. Inside wall leading to Women's restroom
4. Inside wall leading to Men's restroom

When elevators are operable

Persons using wheelchairs and others needing to use the elevators should meet in the elevator lobby. All others should evacuate offices and proceed to the nearest exit and stairwell.

When elevators are not operable

All employees and guests should evacuate offices and proceed to the nearest exit.

Persons choosing to evacuate in evacuation chairs should proceed to their assigned evacuation chair location.

II. Meeting Places For Assistance And Evacuation Chairs

- Library (3 chairs) - [staff names]
- Area adjacent to Rear Office Door and Small Conference Room (5 chairs) - [staff names]
- Board office (2 chairs) - visitors and guests

(Additional evacuation chairs are also available at each location.)

Individuals who need assistance and choose not to be evacuated in evacuation chairs should report to the Board office or the Small Conference Room. A sign must be attached to the window to be visible to the outside, indicating to others that persons are waiting for assistance in these designated areas. (The sign and duct tape are available in both rooms.) Information about the location of these rooms has been communicated to the Fire Department. (Two-way radios and a telephone are located in each of these rooms.)

Others needing assistance or those persons who are able to provide assistance should report to the closest evacuation chair location.

When possible, employees not assisting individuals in evacuation chairs are encouraged to bring manual chairs with them while evacuating.

III. When Assistance Is Not Available

If assistance is not available, employees and guests should report to either the Board office or the Small Conference Room and await assistance from the Fire Department or rescue personnel. A sign must be attached to the window to be visible to the outside, indicating to others that persons are waiting for assistance in these designated areas. (The sign and duct tape are available in both rooms). Information about the location of these rooms has been communicated to the Fire Department. (Two-way radios and a telephone are located in each of these rooms.)

IV. Assigned Stairways

Individuals using evacuation chairs must use the east stairwell next to the Men's Room.

Where possible, others are encouraged to use the west stairwell next to the Women's Room. This includes those persons bringing manual chairs with them.

V. Floor Wardens

- Front office - [staff names]
- Back office - [staff names]

Floor wardens are responsible for overseeing and coordinating evacuation activities, conducting a final pass through in the office space, ensuring that everyone receives the necessary assistance as appropriate, ensuring all doors to the elevator lobby are closed, and reporting the floor evacuation status to the building command center on the first floor.

Two-way radios

There are five two-way radios. Three are located in the small conference room and two are located in the Board office. Where individuals are planning to wait for assistance, at least one will remain in the small conference room and the Board office. The Floor wardens (or alternates, where appropriate)

will have at least one two-way radio. In their absence, other employees may be assigned to assume this responsibility. Floor wardens should assign at least one radio to the first employee to evacuate. This will facilitate communication between rescue personnel and those persons needing assistance.

Flashlights

Four flashlights are also available. Two are located in the Small Conference Room and two are located in the Board office.

VI. Meeting Places

After evacuating the building, employees should proceed to the corner of 13th and F Streets, N.W. in front of MS Grill as a gathering place. If this is not possible, employees should proceed to the corner of 13th and G Streets, N.W. in front of the Covey store. If you are not able to make either gathering spots, you should leave a message at the Executive Director's home (phone number) to make your whereabouts known.

FIRE EXTINGUISHER LOCATIONS

1. **In the kitchen** on the far wall opposite the doorway. (Not enclosed)
2. **Near the Men's restroom** on the wall to the right of the door. (Not enclosed)
3. **Near the Women's restroom** on the wall to the left of the door. This fire extinguisher is enclosed. It is on a shelf built into the wall and has a metal gray door.
4. **Behind Executive Secretary's desk.** This fire extinguisher is enclosed. It is on a shelf built into the wall and has a door with a window so that the extinguisher is visible.

BACKGROUND: HOW THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The Access Board reviewed and updated its emergency evacuation plan so that it effectively addresses the specific needs and preferences of individual employees

and its office location. With a staff of 28 full-time employees, the Board's workforce includes six individuals who use automatic or manual wheelchairs, four individuals who are blind or visually impaired and two individuals who use service animals. Our agency is located on the 10th floor of a building in downtown Washington, DC.

To review and revise our evacuation plan, our agency first organized a small volunteer emergency evacuation committee. This committee began by meeting with staff to discuss evacuation issues in general. Subsequently, the committee met with building management, local fire department personnel and a manufacturer of evacuation chairs, as well as other agencies and groups with evacuation plans involving persons with disabilities.

Many individuals and federal agencies have requested a copy of our evacuation plan and therefore, we are posting our plan on our website. However, because our plan is specifically designed for our workforce, building and location, we thought that it might be of value to also identify and provide discussion of some of the critical issues and questions that we faced in updating our plan.

Specific needs of employees with disabilities

Members of the evacuation committee reviewed the number of employees with disabilities on staff and the types of disabilities. Members of the evacuation committee then met with individual employees with disabilities to discuss their choices and preferences for evacuation. For additional information, see recent guidance provided by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

Evacuation chairs for use by individuals who have a mobility disability

Our evacuation plan includes the use of evacuation chairs for those employees needing assistance. There may be different procedures or preferences among local fire departments regarding evacuation procedures for persons with disabilities. This may include the use of evacuation chairs or the use of a safe room / area of refuge to wait for assistance. For additional information, you may wish to check with your local fire department.

Number of evacuation chairs

The committee took an inventory of the number of evacuation chairs needed for employees requiring assistance. The committee also estimated the number of evacuation chairs that might be needed for Board members and visitors who may attend meetings at the Board's office. Although the Board had a number of evacuation chairs on hand for an emergency, it was determined that 10 new chairs for staff, Board members and visitors would be purchased.

Selection of type of evacuation chairs

The committee reviewed a variety of evacuation chairs on the market and purchased Garaventa Evacu-Trac CD-7 emergency evacuation devices.

Training

Staff training on the new evacuation chairs was necessary. Staff viewed the training videotape provided by the manufacturer and, in addition, received on-site training from the manufacturer. Additional practice for Board staff is planned on a regular basis.

- It is our goal to familiarize everyone in the agency with the evacuation chairs, recognizing that not all individuals will be either available or able to offer assistance.
- It has been important that employees practice with a volunteer in the chair to gain experience maneuvering the chair in the stairwell. Because our evacuation chairs are low to the ground, this training also has provided an opportunity for individuals requiring assistance to practice transferring into and out of the evacuation chairs.

Manual wheelchairs

Employees who are not providing assistance have been encouraged to exit with the manual wheelchairs belonging to those individuals using evacuation chairs. It is understood that this may not be practical in all cases. When it is, individuals in evacuation chairs will have the opportunity to transfer back into their wheelchairs and move further away from the building in a more efficient and independent manner.

Alternative to evacuation chairs

Our workforce has a varied work and travel schedule. Because of this, the committee considered that there may be times when there will not be enough individuals in the office to provide assistance. In this situation, our plan includes two offices designated as “waiting areas” where individuals using wheelchairs or mobility devices and others needing assistance will report and await assistance from the fire department. One designated office is at the front of the building, the other is at the back of the building. Each office has a pre-printed sign requesting rescue assistance, a window, a telephone and a two-way radio. Employees have been instructed to post this sign in the window facing the street or alley to alert the fire department of their location. Employees also will be able to communicate by two-way radio with building management and by telephone with the fire department. The location of these “waiting areas” has also been communicated to the local fire department.

Characteristics of our building

Use of different stairwells

Our building has two stairwells. We surveyed these two stairwells to determine landing size, landing uniformity and exit location. One stairwell has slightly larger landings than the other. This information has been critical in planning for use of evacuation chairs because a certain landing length is necessary for pivoting the evacuation chairs. In addition, the smaller stairwell has stairs on the last landing which go below grade and then up to exit in the alley behind our building. Because our evacuation chairs only descend and do not ascend stairs, this would necessitate lifting the evacuation chair to exit into the back alley.

Based on the differing characteristics of the stairwells, we have designated the larger stairwell to employees using evacuation chairs and encouraged all other employees to use the second, smaller stairwell, if possible.

Location of fire alarms and extinguishers

Committee members conducted an inventory of the location of fire alarms and extinguishers on our floor. These locations were included in the evacuation

plan. Staff has been instructed to personally locate each of the fire alarms and extinguishers.

Designated meeting locations

We have designated two locations for employees to meet after evacuating the building. The primary location is at the end of the block. The secondary location is further from the building in the event that the first location is not appropriate given the emergency. Neither location requires individuals to cross an intersection.

If employees are unable to meet at the two designated locations, they have been instructed to phone a designated employee's home number and leave a message on their answering machine.

Types of alarms and elevator use

We have clarified with our building management the different types of alarms in the building so that we will be able to respond accordingly. We also have learned that during certain types of emergencies, elevators authorized by Fire Department personnel may be available and have noted that possibility in our plan.

Communication and evacuation process

Given the complexities of a stairwell evacuation, we were concerned about the evacuation process and being able to communicate with each other, the building management and any emergency personnel in the event of an emergency. To address the issues, we incorporated the following in our plan.

Two-way radios

The Board purchased five two-way radios. The two-way radios are being stored in the two offices designated as waiting areas. The two Floor wardens have the overall responsibility to oversee and coordinate evacuation activities. Part of this responsibility includes assigning these two-way radios to certain employees during an emergency.

- One is for the first employee to proceed down the stairs to the primary designated meeting location;
- Two are for those who remain in designated waiting areas rather than evacuate; and
- Two are for the two floor wardens.

The most critical component of this piece of our communication plan is that these two-way radios use the same channels as our building management. This will allow us to communicate with building management from the beginning of an evacuation and to provide the status of our evacuation.

Designated meeting locations

The two-way radios will be used in these locations as well to determine the whereabouts of employees.

Rechargeable flashlights

The Board purchased rechargeable flashlights for employees to use in the stairwells.

Emergency contact information

We have updated all emergency contact information, including employees' cell phone numbers and home phone numbers.

Meeting with fire department

We met with the local fire department most likely to respond to an emergency and communicated specific information regarding our needs. Once recorded, this information will be available when the department responds to an emergency at our building. We included the number of people using evacuation chairs, others needing assistance, and the location of the offices where individuals may be waiting for assistance.

Information regarding workforce for building management staff & fire department personnel

- Posted in the fire control room at the lobby level of our building is a list of the employees using wheelchairs and other mobility aids and their floor numbers. This list also includes employees' suite numbers for those employees who may be in their offices beyond the traditional work day.
- Also posted in the fire control room and on the back of the doors in both stairwells at the 10th floor are floor plans showing where the two designated waiting area offices are.

Providing other types of assistance

Our plan also includes providing assistance for individuals who are blind or visually impaired or need any type of assistance.

Training and practice

We are currently meeting weekly with employees either to train on the evacuation chairs or to practice different components of our plan. Plans are underway to hold ongoing practice drills to improve the speed at which we exit the building.

Cross training or the buddy system

Because many Board employees have varied work and travel schedules, it is difficult to predict which individual employees may be in the office in the event of an emergency. Thus, we have focused on cross training, as opposed to a more traditional "buddy system" approach, to train as many employees as possible to provide assistance and to perform the various roles called for in our plan.

Source: Access Board

Link as of May 2008:

www.access-board.gov/evacplan.htm

Tracking Tool

This section is designed to help you keep track of your training in **Addressing Disability Issues in Emergency Preparedness**. We recommend that you review this section regularly as you participate in the planning and readiness process for your organization.

Initials:					
Date:					
Dates When Practice Drills Carried Out:					



section 5

Assisting Persons with
Disabilities in an Evacuation

SECTION 5

Assisting Persons with Disabilities in an Evacuation

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Assign office, class, and event locations, if possible, in most accessible locations.
- Ensure exit routes and areas of refuge are always clear and properly marked.
- Participate in and help identify gaps in evacuation plans during practice drills.
- Respect that the person with the disability may be the best authority on how to be evacuated.
- Provide adequate notice that a potential danger exists and that evacuation should begin.
- Offer assistance but let the person explain what help is needed.
- Carrying a person is not advisable except in the most extreme of circumstances.
- Be aware that a service animal's sense of direction may become confused during an emergency.
- Do not abandon the person after exiting a building. Lead the person to a safe place with others.



The following are some suggestions that may provide additional assistance for specific disabilities.

ASSISTING PERSONS WHO USE WHEELCHAIRS

- Be familiar with designated areas of refuge and location of evacuation equipment for wheelchair users.
- If the person is unable to speak clearly, look for a sign on the chair with printed instructions.
- Only in situations of extreme danger should untrained people attempt to carry a person in a wheelchair.
- Prior to moving the person, check for life-support equipment.
- Be aware that wheelchairs have parts not designed to handle the stress of lifting.
- If you and/or others cannot safely carry a person up/down stairs, don't do it. Instead, position the person in the safest place possible according to the emergency and alert emergency personnel of person's location.



ASSISTING PERSONS WITH MOBILITY LIMITATIONS – NON WHEELCHAIR USERS

- Do not interfere with person's movement.
- Clear displaced and fallen obstacles from exit routes.
- If the stairs are crowded, you may act as a buffer.

ASSISTING PERSONS WITH LIMITED COMMUNICATION

- Look for an instruction card on the person.
- During an evacuation, give clear instructions.
- Maintain eye contact with the individual to insure all directions are heard and understood.

ASSISTING DEAF OR HARD-OF-HEARING PERSONS

- Provide the person with a flashlight for their preparedness kit so they can signal their location and to help with lip reading in the dark.
- Get attention of the person before speaking and look at them when speaking.
- Use facial expressions and hand gestures to communicate.
- Speak using short sentences.
- Use written notes to indicate emergency and instructions, for example, "Fire! Go out rear door now!"
- Check to be sure you are understood.
- Be patient, the person may have difficulty understanding the urgency of your message.
- Be aware that the person may not be able to hear oral commands issued by authorities.
- When out of danger, offer to make phone calls if a TTY is not available.



ASSISTING PERSONS WHO ARE BLIND OR HAVE LOW VISION

- In the planning phase, offer emergency information in an accessible format.
- Provide orientation to building evacuation routes and pull alarm locations.
- During an emergency, announce your presence when entering the person's area.
- Offer your elbow; do not grab their arm or hand.
- Communicate through the evacuation by describing in advance physical barriers or action to be taken such as "Take two steps down."

ASSISTING PERSONS WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL DISABILITIES

- Make sure exits and safe areas are clearly marked prior to an emergency.
- Understand that the person may have difficulties in concentrating, handling stress, and initiating personal contact.
- Help reduce stress during an emergency by offering to escort the person through the evacuation.
- Giving clear and simple instructions.

ASSISTING PERSONS WITH LEARNING DIFFERENCES

- During the planning phase, offer to provide information in alternate formats.
- Provide adequate signage with simple symbols and review with them for understanding.
- When developing printed emergency materials, review to insure easy "readability."
- During an evacuation, be patient giving instructions slowly and clearly.
- Offer to accompany them as their sense of direction may be limited.
- Encourage the person to practice their evacuation route(s) regularly.

ASSISTING PERSONS WHO ARE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

- Be aware that they may be unable to understand the emergency and could become disoriented or confused about the proper way to react.
- During an evacuation, give instructions slowly and clearly.
- Prior to an emergency, make sure designated emergency routes are marked with signage that communicates with color and symbols rather than words.
- Encourage the person to practice their evacuation route(s) regularly.

ASSISTING PERSONS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS

- Medical conditions include pregnancy, respiratory conditions, and cardiac problems.
- Offer assistance walking down stairs.
- Find ways to reduce stress, exertion, and exposure to dust or smoke.
- Remind person to bring medication or inhalers.
- Allow rest periods during evacuation if possible.

ASSISTING OWNERS OF SERVICE ANIMALS

- Do not pet or offer food or water without the permission of the owner.
- Plan for the service animal to be evacuated with the owner.
- In the event that you are asked to handle the service animal while assisting the individual, hold the leash and not the harness if present.

Source: Emergency Evacuation Guidelines for Persons with Disabilities
by Western Washington University.

Link as of May 2008:

<http://www.acadweb.wvu.edu/hr/disability/EvacGuideForPWD.pdf>

Tracking Tool

This section is designed to help you keep track of your training in **Addressing Disability Issues in Emergency Preparedness**. We recommend that you review this section regularly as you participate in the planning and readiness process for your organization.

Initials:					
Date:					
Dates When Practice Drills Carried Out:					



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Pathways
TO EMPLOYMENT

DHS, DEED, MSCOD



section

Employee Emergency
Plan and Kit

6

SECTION 6

Employee Emergency Plan and Kit

The Emergency Preparedness Employee Guide includes more detailed information on these topics. As an employee, be sure to lead by example. Develop your own plan and kit.

I. Develop a Plan

This includes a Communications Plan so you know how to keep in touch with co-workers, family and friends, a Go Plan with what you will do if you need to leave your workplace (such as due to evacuation because of a chemical spill in the area), and a Stay Plan with what you'll do if you need to shelter-in-place.

II. Build Your Emergency Kits

Everyone should have an emergency kit. Even if we don't have a disability, we will likely need certain items in the kit during an emergency.

Your workplace Stay Kit includes emergency supplies such as short-term food and water for yourself and any service animal, medical equipment, radio, flashlight, extra batteries, and other items. The Go Kit includes key items, medications, and other items that you need to take with you if you need to evacuate your workplace. We recommend using a backpack or something easily transportable for the Go Kit. Both kits should include a list of individuals to contact in case of an emergency and any instructions for the first responders, including any medicine they need to know you are taking.

If you use a service animal, make sure to have identification, or a clearly marked harness, so that first responders will know that your animal is a service animal and not a pet. Additionally, a leash or harness is an important item for managing an animal that may become nervous or upset during a crisis.

III. Stay Informed

Start now by working with your employer on emergency procedures in case of common emergencies such as tornadoes, chemical spills, fires and floods. The more you know, the better your plan.

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Pathways
TO EMPLOYMENT

DHS, DEED, MSCOD



section 7

Evacuation Equipment –
Examples

SECTION 7

Evacuation Equipment – Examples

The increased awareness in Emergency Preparedness has resulted in many new product launches in the marketplace. Below are some current examples.

EZ Glide® Evacuation Chair

Evacuate individuals quickly, safely, and easily from multiple level buildings. The EZ Glide® Track System carries the weight down stairs, allowing one person to evacuate individuals up to 200lbs, and two people to evacuate individuals up to 500lbs.

www.ferno.com/evacuation

Evacusafe

A step-by-step evacuation chair solution. A single user can evacuate a colleague over stairs with a smooth controlled descent - no heavy lifting necessary.

www.evacusafe.net

Comfort Carrier Evacuation Package

Cost effective, easy to use, versatile, ADA compliant lifesaving device allows two or more people without special training to help evacuate anyone unable to walk, whether due to disability or trauma resulting from the emergency. Ideally suited to wheelchair users.



http://www.broadenedhorizons.com/comfortcarrier_evacuation.htm

**Garaventa Evacu-Trac CD7 -
Evacuation Chair**

Provides safe, reliable and fast emergency evacuation. Lightweight, compact and sets up in seconds. Its patented speed governor and braking system allow a small attendant to easily evacuate a larger person securely and maintain full control of the speed of descent.

www.evacutrac.com

Stryker Evacuation Chair

Designed for evacuation of disabled or injured persons from multi-level facilities in emergency situations, this evacuation chair helps to maximize mobility in tight spaces and allows one person to control movement down stairs without lifting. Folds to compact size for convenient storage.

www.evacuation.stryker.com

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Pathways
TO EMPLOYMENT

DHS, DEED, MSCOD

Form **8826**
(Rev. December 2006)
Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Disabled Access Credit

▶ Attach to your tax return.

OMB No. 1545-1206

Attachment
Sequence No. **86**

Name(s) shown on return

Identifying number

1	Total eligible access expenditures (see instructions)	1		
2	Minimum amount	2	\$	250.00
3	Subtract line 2 from line 1. If zero or less, enter -0-	3		
4	Maximum amount	4	\$10,000.00	
5	Enter the smaller of line 3 or line 4	5		
6	Multiply line 5 by 50% (.50)	6		
7	Disabled access credit from partnerships and S corporations	7		
8	Add lines 6 and 7, but do not enter more than \$5,000. Partnerships and S corporations, report this amount on Schedule K; all others, report this amount on the applicable line of Form 3800 (e.g., line 1g of the 2006 Form 3800)	8		

General Instructions

Section references are to the Internal Revenue Code.

What's New

- The tax liability limit is no longer figured on this form; instead, it must be figured on Form 3800, General Business Credit.
- Taxpayers that are not partnerships or S corporations, and whose only source of this credit is from those pass-through entities, are not required to complete or file this form. Instead, they can report this credit directly on line 1g of Form 3800.
- The IRS will revise this December 2006 version of the form only when necessary. Continue to use this version for tax years beginning after 2005 until a new revision is issued.

Purpose of Form

Eligible small businesses use Form 8826 to claim the disabled access credit. This credit is part of the general business credit.

Definitions

Eligible Small Business

exceed \$1 million or had no more than 30 full-time employees during the preceding tax year and

- Elects (by filing Form 8826) to claim the disabled access credit for the tax year.

For purposes of the definition:

- Gross receipts are reduced by returns and allowances made during the tax year,
- An employee is considered full time if employed at least 30 hours per week for 20 or more calendar weeks in the tax year, and
- All members of the same controlled group and all persons under common control generally are considered to be one person—see section 44(d)(2).

Eligible Access Expenditures

For purposes of the credit, these expenditures are amounts paid or incurred by the eligible small business to comply with applicable

2. To provide qualified interpreters or other methods of making audio materials available to hearing-impaired individuals;

3. To provide qualified readers, taped texts, and other methods of making visual materials available to individuals with visual impairments; or

4. To acquire or modify equipment or devices for individuals with disabilities.

The expenditures must be reasonable and necessary to accomplish the above purposes.

Eligible expenditures do not include expenditures in 1 above that are paid or incurred in connection with any facility first placed in service after November 5, 1990.

Eligible access expenditures must meet those standards issued by the Secretary of the Treasury as agreed to by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board and several other departments. For example, the Department of Justice, under the Americans with Disabilities Act, requires that an individual, to be eligible for the credit, must have a physical or mental impairment that limits one or more

section 8

Tax Incentives for Employers

SECTION 8

Tax Incentives for Employers

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is an international, toll-free, consulting service that provides information regarding job accommodations. This publication summarizes tax incentives related to accessibility and the employment of people with disabilities. If you need further assistance, please contact an accountant or tax attorney. You can also visit “JAN on the Web” at: www.jan.wvu.edu.

For information on specific agencies and organizations, please look in your local area phone directory, specifically in the Blue Pages, for government contacts and the Yellow Pages for other organizations.

DISABLED ACCESS CREDIT (DAC)

P.L. 101-508, The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990, (OBRA '90), contains a tax incentive to encourage small businesses to comply with the ADA. The DAC is found in Section 11611 of OBRA '90, which establishes Section 44 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. DAC is available to an “eligible small business” and is equal to 50% of the “eligible access expenditures” which do exceed \$250 but do not exceed \$10,250, for a maximum credit of \$5,000 a year. DAC became effective on the date of enactment of the law, November 5, 1990, and applies to expenditures paid or incurred after that date. It is included as part of the General Business Credit and is subject to the rules of current law which limit the amount of General Business Credit that can be used for any taxable year. DAC can be carried forward up to 15 years and back for three years but not back to a taxable year prior to the date of enactment.





An “eligible small business” is “any person” whose gross receipts did not exceed \$1,000,000 for the preceding taxable year, or who employed not more than 30 full-time employees during the preceding year. A full-time employee is defined as one who is employed at least 30 hours per week for 20 or more calendar weeks in the taxable year. In general, all members of a controlled group of corporations are treated as one person for purposes of

credit eligibility, and the dollar limitation among the members of any group will be apportioned by regulation. In the case of a partnership, the expenditure limitation requirements will apply to the partnership and to each partner. Similar rules will apply to S corporations and their shareholders. “Eligible access expenditures” are defined as “amounts paid or incurred by an eligible small business for the purpose of enabling small businesses to comply with applicable requirements” of ADA.

Included are expenditures for:

1. Removing architectural, communication, physical or transportation barriers which prevent a business from being accessible to, or usable by, individuals with disabilities;
2. Providing qualified interpreters or other effective methods of making aurally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments;
3. Providing qualified readers, taped texts, and other effective methods of making visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments;
4. Acquiring or modifying equipment or devices for individuals with disabilities; and
5. Providing other similar services, modifications, materials or equipment.

All expenditures must be “reasonable” and must meet the standards promulgated by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) with the concurrence of the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board. Expenses incurred for new construction are not eligible. For the purposes of DAC, disability is defined exactly as in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

An eligible small business under Section 44 may deduct the difference between the disabled access credit claimed and the disabled access expenditures incurred, up to \$15,000, under Section 190 provided such expenditures are eligible for the Section 190 deduction.

For additional information on the Disabled Access Credit, contact a local Internal Revenue Service Office: www.irs.gov/businesses or call 800-829-4933 (V) 800-829-4059 (TTY).



ARCHITECTURAL AND TRANSPORTATION BARRIER REMOVAL DEDUCTION

In 1986, Congress amended Section 190 of the Tax Reform Act to extend permanently the annual \$35,000 tax deduction for the removal of architectural and transportation barriers. P.L. 101-508, the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990, amended Section 190 and reduced the deduction from \$35,000 to \$15,000, effective for tax years

after 1990. Under Section 190, businesses may choose to deduct up to \$15,000 for making a facility or public transportation vehicle, owned or leased for use in the business, more accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. A facility is all or any part of a building, structure, equipment, road, walk, parking lot, or similar property. A public transportation vehicle is a vehicle such as a bus or railroad car, that provides transportation service to the public, or to customers.

The deduction may not be used for expenses incurred for new construction, for a complete renovation of a facility or public transportation vehicle, or for the normal replacement of depreciable property. In the case of a partnership, the \$15,000 limit applies to the partnership and to each partner. Amounts in excess of the \$15,000 maximum annual deduction can be added to the basis of the property subject to depreciation. In order for expenses to be deductible, accessibility standards established under the Section 190 Regulations must be met.

For additional information on Section 190, contact a local Internal Revenue Service Office: www.irs.gov/businesses or call 800-829-4933 (V) 800-829-4059 (TTY).

Source: Job Accommodation Network (JAN), a service of the Office of Disability Employment Policy of the U.S. Department of Labor.
Link as of May 2008: www.jan.wvu.edu/media/tax.html

Tracking Tool

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Pathways
TO EMPLOYMENT

DHS, DEED, MSCOD



section 9

Practical Tips and Etiquette

SECTION 9

Practical Tips and Etiquette

When speaking with a person with a disability, look at and speak directly to that person, rather than through a companion or attendant. Try to be at eye level.



When referring to a person with a disability, make reference to the person first, then the disability. Use terminology such as “a person with a disability” rather than a “disabled person.”



To accommodate individuals with learning disabilities and vision impairments when using presentation slides, be sure to explain what is on the slide. Highlight points and convey enough information to describe pictures to someone who has no vision. Also provide information in several types of alternative formats (tapes, Braille, diskette). Watch for inadequate lighting, which inhibits communication by persons who have hearing and learning limitations.

Do not touch a service animal, or the person the animal assists, without permission. Noises may distract the animal from doing his/her job, and feeding the service animal may disrupt the animal’s schedule.



Clear the aisles of excess debris for the use of mobility aids.

Listen attentively when talking with a person who has a speech impairment. Keep your manner encouraging rather than correcting. It is better to exercise patience rather than attempt to speak for a person. When necessary, ask short questions that require short answers or a nod or a shake of the head. Never pretend to understand if you are having difficulty doing so.



To get the attention of a person with a hearing impairment, tap the person on the shoulder or wave your hand. Look directly at the person and speak clearly, naturally, and slowly to establish if the person can read lips. Not all individuals with hearing impairments can lip-read. Those who can will rely on facial expressions and other body language to help in understanding. Place yourself facing the light source and keeping your hands away from your mouth when speaking. Shouting probably will not help, but written notes may. To facilitate conversation, be prepared to offer a visual cue to a hearing impaired person or an audible cue to a vision impaired person, especially when more than one person is speaking.

Do not move a wheelchair, crutches, or other mobility aid out of reach of a person who uses them. Also, do not push a mobility aid without first asking the occupant if you may do so. Don't lean on a person's mobility aid when talking, or pat a person who uses a wheelchair or scooter on the head.



When presenting, make sure that audiovisual equipment does not block the view of people who use accessible seating, and work around any architectural barriers such as pillars or columns to assure good visibility for all.

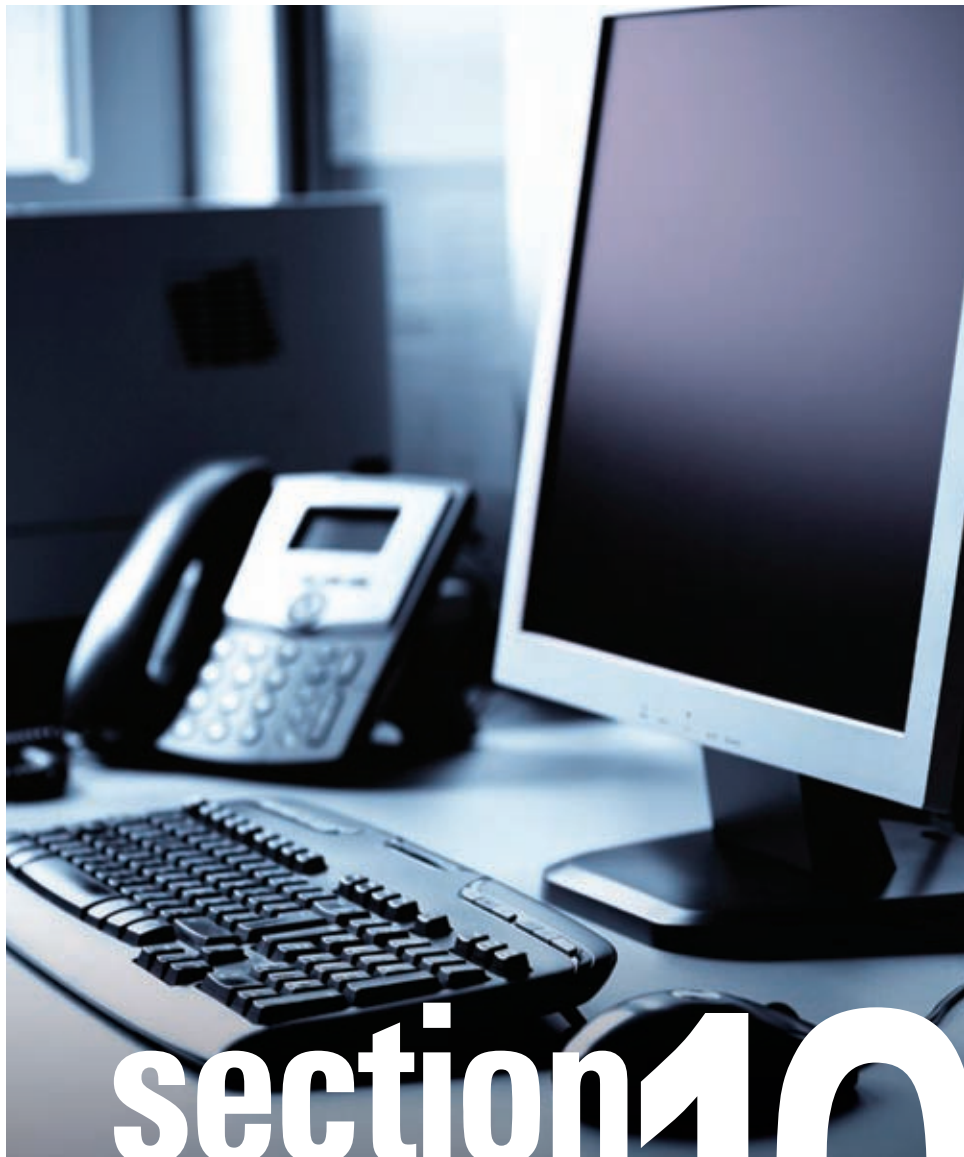
A source in preparing this section is the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), a service of the Office of Disability Employment Policy of the U.S. Department of Labor.

Link as of May 2008:
www.jan.wvu.edu/media/etipresent.html

Tracking Tool

This section is designed to help you keep track of your training in **Addressing Disability Issues in Emergency Preparedness**. We recommend that you review this section regularly as you participate in the planning and readiness process for your organization.

Initials:					
Date:					



section 10

Resources and Links

SECTION 10

Resources and Links

For a quick and immediate response, individuals with hearing loss should call emergency providers through video relay service, ip-relay or Minnesota Relay.

www.disability.state.mn.us

Phone 651-361-7800 or 1-800-945-8913 (V/TTY)

The **Minnesota State Council on Disability** is a Minnesota state agency that advises the governor, the state legislature, state agencies, and the general public on public policy issues affecting persons with disabilities. We aim to be your technical assistance and training resource.

www.ready.gov

Ready.gov is a service of the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security and CitizenCorps, offering services such as **ReadyBusiness**, a resource on emergency preparedness, planning, and information for business.

www.access-board.gov Phone 202-272-0080

The **Access Board** provides technical assistance and training on guidelines and standards, enforcing accessibility standards for federally funded facilities.

www.cdc.gov Phone 404-639-3311

The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** protect the health and safety of people, providing credible information to enhance health decisions, and promoting health through strong partnerships.

www.cdc.gov/niosh Phone 800-CDC-INFO

The **National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)**, part of the CDC, is the Federal agency responsible for conducting research and making recommendations for the prevention of work-related disease and injury.

www.codeready.org

The **codeReady** emergency preparedness campaign is a State of Minnesota effort implemented by the Dept. of Health and the Dept. of Public Safety.

www.disabilitypreparedness.gov Email: disability.preparedness@dhs.gov

The **Interagency Coordinating Council on Emergency Preparedness and Individuals with Disabilities** works to ensure that the federal government appropriately supports safety and security for individuals with disabilities in disaster situations.

www.DisasterHelp.gov

DisasterHelp is a FEMA site containing information and services for individuals, families, and businesses needing preparedness and disaster recovery assistance.

www.dol.gov/odep Phone 202-693-7880

The **Office of Disability Employment Policy**, an agency within the U.S. Department of Labor, provides national leadership to increase employment opportunities for adults and youth with disabilities while striving to eliminate barriers to employment.

www.eeoc.gov Phone 800-669-4000

The **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission** is the enforcing agency for several discrimination-related federal statutes, including Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), which prohibits employment discrimination against individuals with disabilities. The EEOC's 800-number routes individuals to their closest field office.

<http://evac.icdi.wvu.edu> Phone 304-293-7186

Project Safe EV-AC, a three year development project, will improve evacuation from buildings, vehicles, and other settings during emergencies, by providing training materials on the EVacuation and ACcommodation of people with disabilities.

www.fema.gov Phone 1-800-621-FEMA (3362)

The **Federal Emergency Management Agency** works to reduce the loss of life and property through preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation.

www.hsem.state.mn.us Phone 651-201-7400

The **MN Homeland Security and Emergency Management** is a division of the MN Dept. of Public Safety offering information, resources, and training.

www.jan.wvu.edu Phone 800-526-7234

The **Job Accommodation Network** is a free consulting service that provides information about job accommodations, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the employability of people with disabilities.

www.nfpa.org Phone 800-344-3555

The **National Fire Protection Association** provides and advocates scientifically-based consensus codes and standards, research, training and education.

www.noaa.gov Phone 202-482-6090

The **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**, part of the U.S. Dept. of Commerce, offers products and services that support economic vitality.

www.nod.org Phone 202-293-5960

The **National Organization on Disability** seeks to expand the participation and contribution of America's 54 million men, women and children with disabilities in all aspects of life.

www.nsc.org Phone 630-285-1121

The **National Safety Council** offers products, services, resources, and training to prevent and mitigate human suffering and economic losses arising from preventable causes.

www.osha.gov Phone 800-321-6742

As part of the U.S. Dept. of Labor, the **Occupational Safety & Health Administration** provides compliance assistance, educational resources, and enforcement in order to save lives, prevent injuries, and protect the health of America's workers.

www.PrepareNow.Org

PrepareNow exists to ensure that the needs and concerns of vulnerable people are addressed in emergency preparedness and response.

www.redcross.org Phone 202-303-4498

The **American Red Cross** offers preparedness resources and the **Be Red Cross Ready** online educational presentation.

Tracking Tool

I have read and understand this resource section of the **Addressing Disability Issues in Emergency Preparedness**. (Please initial and date below. While we recommend that each supervisory employee have their own Guide, we have provided room for up to five supervisory employees to confirm their understanding of this section.)

Initials:					
Date:					



Minnesota State Council
On Disability

www.disability.state.mn.us

council.disability@state.mn.us

651-361-7800 (v/tty)

800-945-8913 (v/tty)

Pathways
TO EMPLOYMENT

DHS, DEED, MSCOD